

MINUTES  
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
EDINA HUMAN RIGHTS & RELATIONS COMMISSION  
November 27, 2012  
7:00 PM

***I. CALL TO ORDER***

Chair Kingston called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

***II. ROLL CALL***

Answering roll call were Commissioners Bigbee, Erhardt, Finsness, Newell, Seidman, Stanton, Winnick and Chair Kingston, and Student Members Mohtadi and Stang. Staff present: Scott Neal, City Manager and temporary Staff Liaison; and Ari Klugman, City Manager Intern, Kaylin Martin, Communications Coordinator.

***III. MEETING AGENDA APPROVED***

**Motion was made by Commissioner Stanton to approve the meeting agenda of the November 27, 2012 meeting with the addition of domestic partners statute revision. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Seidman.**

Ayes: Bigbee, Erhardt, Finsness, Kingston, Newell, Seidman, Stanton, Winnick.  
Motion carried.

***IV. CONSENT AGENDA ADOPTED***

*IV. A. October 23, 2012 Minutes*

**Motion was made by Commissioner Stanton and seconded by Commissioner Bigbee to approve the October 23, 2012 minutes with the revisions submitted by Commissioner Kingston prior to the meeting.**

Ayes: Bigbee, Erhardt, Finsness, Kingston, Newell, Seidman, Stanton, Winnick.  
Motion carried.

***V. COMMUNITY COMMENT***

There were no community comments.

***VI. REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS***

*VI. A. Karmit Bulman, Conflict Resolution Center*

Commissioner Newell introduced our speaker Karmit Bulman Executive Director of the Conflict Resolution Center.

Bulman presented the following information:

They recently changed their name from Minneapolis Mediation program to Conflict Resolution Center (CRC).

The CRC aims to bring people together to have a facilitated dialogue and solve conflict. Impartial party brings people together to solve disputes in an agreeable manner. Mediation is neutral. Mediation needs to be voluntary, confidential and respectful. They offer mediation services for neighborhoods, businesses, relationship/family, landlord- tenant conflict.

Working with the Edina Resource Center to do outreach, has served as many as 90 Edina Residents at any time. There is a fee, but if people cannot afford the fee it's waived.

Training in mediation: under Minnesota Law to be a qualified neutral you go through 30 hours of training bylaw. A little over 30 hours, includes an observation period.

The CRC also works with schools, and is trying to work with the Edina Schools but right now they are not in the school.

#### *VI. B. Year in Review Presentation*

The Commissioners presented a PowerPoint highlighting their work throughout the year.

Chair Kingston shared information about Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals. The Edina HRRC was one of seven organizations to help bring this to the University of Minnesota Campus. The exhibit took place from April 2<sup>nd</sup> to May 11.

Commissioner Seidman shared information about the City's Religious Observance Policy. Policy was approved in the Spring. The policy was to make every effort to not hold public meetings on significant days of Religious Observance. Right now, the City has eight holidays they recognize.

Commissioner Bigbee shared as a result of the policy; the Hindu community reached out to the City and invited them to their Diwali celebration.

Commissioner Bigbee and Student Commissioner Mohtadi shared information about the Conflict – Free Initiative and resolution. The Conflict free initiative was led by our Students. Conflict Free Initiative regarded the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The resolution recommended the City of Edina support companies that traced their supply chains and not include conflict minerals in their production.

Chair Kingston shared there is a wonderful article about the Conflict free Resolution and our student member Tara Mohtadi in Edina Magazine.

Commissioner gave an update on the Tom Oye award and encouraged applications. The award is given annual to individuals who live and work in Edina and who promote and advance human relations and rights. Applications are due by January 15.

Commissioner Stanton gave an update of the marriage amendment. In February, the Commission recommended a resolution to the City Council opposing the Minnesota Constitutional amendment on Marriage. The City Council was the first suburban City to take a view on the issue. The amendment was voted down by the state on November 6, 2012. Edina voted down the margin by almost 2 to 1, 34%. Every precinct in Edina voted against the amendment. Minnesota was the first state to defeat the amendment, 32 other states had passed it.

Commissioner Stanton gave an update of the voter id amendment. The amendment was voted down by the state, defeated by a bigger margin than the marriage amendment statewide.

Commissioner Seidman shared information about Days of Remembrance. This was the second year we celebrated Days of Remembrance. To remember the 17 million people who were killed during the Holocaust. The proclamation that was signed this year automatically recognizes the Days of Remembrance annually.

Commissioner Finsness and Student Commissioner Stang shared information about Edina Read's anti-bullying event. April 22, 2013 from 7- 8:30 p.m. at the Fireside room at the Edina Senior Center. The book is called, A Thinking Man's Bully by Michael Adelberg.

Commissioner Winnick shared information about the City's Bias/Hate Crime Response Plan. The City has established a response plan to be administered by this Commission. This year to date there has not been a hate crime. We have established a network of community resources that can be activated if a response is needed.

#### *VI. C. Appoint Nominating Committee*

Commissioner Winnick explained the bylaws indicate the need for a nominating committee to elect two positions, Chair and Vice Chair. Both positions will serve one year. The Election will take place in February.

Manager Neal informed the Commission that although ballots are allowed, they need to be signed in order to conform to open meeting laws.

#### *VI. D. General Work Plan Updates*

- I. Initiate Census Research Funding Recommendation  
Commissioner Stanton stated there is no other news to report.
- II. Anti-bullying Event and Education Commissioner Finsness stated there is no other news to report.  
Commissioner Bigbee stated the HRRC is interested in input from residents about other forms of bullying.
- III. Marriage Amendment  
Commissioner Stanton stated we can remove this from the work plan.
- IV. Voter ID Amendment  
Commissioner Stanton stated we can remove this from the work plan.
- V. Tom Oye Award  
Developed press release and a mailing piece has been sent out to over 50 letters to a variety of civic leaders. I would encourage the commissioners to continue to think of nominees or nominators. Applications must be received by January 15. Award will be presented in April. Information is available on the City's website.

#### *VI. E. Domestic Partner Statute Revisions*

Commissioner Stanton passed out a copy of a resolution the HRRC recommended a couple years ago and the City Council passed. The City of Minneapolis more than a decade ago had domestic partner benefits for employees. It was challenged in court and the City lost and struck down the ordinance. The Minnesota Statute 471.61 defined dependents, which prohibited domestic partners. In 2008, the legislature tried to change the statute by adding a phrase stating and others as defined by governmental units at their discretion. The legislation had both bipartisan representation, one of the republicans was then Representative Erhardt. It passed overwhelmingly in both the house and the senate but Governor Pawlenty vetoed it. Last session it was reintroduced, but it went nowhere. The view of the populous has changed, and this section is going to have to be changed anyway because the state law is in conflict of the federal affordable care act which allows persons under 26 to be on their parents insurance.

Commissioner Stanton asked if they need to have the City Council reaffirm this.  
City Manager Neal recommended sending the resolution to the Council.

Commissioner Stanton moved to re-pass the resolution and recommend it to the Council. It would no longer be Minnesota Statutes 2009, it would be 2012. Remove the word minor and dependent students under the age of 25.

Resolution recommended to the Council should read:

**Be it Resolved:** The Edina City Council urges the Minnesota Legislature and Governor to amend M. S. 471.61, Subdivision 1a as follows:

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2012, section 471.61, subdivision 1a is amended to read:

Subd. 1a. **Dependents.** Notwithstanding the provisions of Minnesota Statutes 1969, section 471.61, as amended by Laws 1971, chapter 451, section 1 the word "dependents" as used therein shall mean spouse

and unmarried children under the age of 26 years, and others as defined by governmental units at their discretion.

**Commissioner Stanton moved that the City Council adopt the recommended resolution or a similar resolution. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Finsness.**

Ayes: Bigbee, Erhardt, Finsness, Kingston, Newell, Seidman, Stanton, Winnick.  
Motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS  
There was no correspondence or petitions.

VII. CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

Commissioner Finsness urged citizens to participate in the Edina Read's event by reading a Thinking Man's Bully and attending the event on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7pm at the Senior Center.

Chair Kingston reminded the group there is no December meeting and the January meeting will be on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

VIII. STAFF COMMENTS

Manager Neal shared this will be his last meeting with the HRRC, Staff Liaison Schaefer will be returning in January.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business on the Commission Agenda, **Commissioner Stanton moved and Commissioner Winnick seconded adjournment of the meeting.**

Ayes: Bigbee, Erhardt, Finsness, Kingston, Newell, Seidman, Stanton, Winnick.  
Motion carried.

Chair Kingston declared the meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Minutes approved by HRRC, November 27, 2012

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Ari Klugman, City Manager Intern

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Jessi Kingston, HRRC Chair